

Access

Published by the Library of Michigan

April 2001

Volume XVIII No. 10

ISSN 1051-0818

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netLibrary Now A Part of Library of Michigan Collection

MEL Ebooks

By Carey L. Draeger, Public Information Officer

It's 10:30 p.m. and you're working on an important presentation for the following day. You remember something you read in a book about Nordstrom's management philosophy and would like to include a quote in your presentation. You don't have the book and your local library closed at 9:00 p.m. What do you do?

Let MEL Ebooks come to the rescue! Beginning this month, the Library of Michigan will offer Michigan Electronic Library Ebooks (MEL Ebooks), a collection of electronic books via AccessMichigan. The Library has arranged to purchase 8,000 titles from netLibrary through the Michigan Library Consortium (MLC). These titles will be added to the 3,000 titles found in the public domain netLibrary collection. All 11,000 titles are available at no cost to all types of Michigan libraries and their users. "All users have to do is register at their local libraries to use the MEL Ebooks collection from home or work as well as at their libraries," said Statewide Database Administrator Becky Cawley.

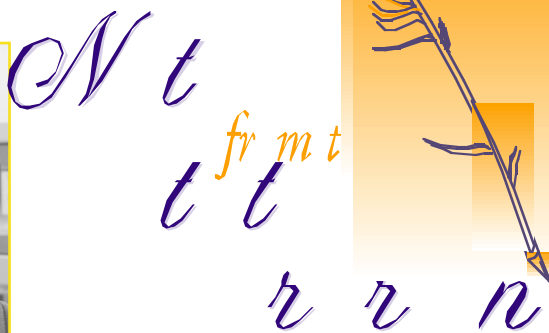
"The Library of Michigan is pleased to make a base collection of netLibrary titles available to all Michigan residents," said State Librarian Christie Pearson Brandau. "By purchasing the titles through MLC, the Library will maximize its buying power and will allow greater discounts to libraries who buy netLibrary titles in the future. Also, we hope that when librarians across the state consider purchasing additional netLibrary titles, they will decide to add these titles to the MEL Ebook collection. By doing so, we will build a stronger collection and will implement a new model of resource sharing."

Michigan librarians will have a unique opportunity through June 30. Any library that chooses to purchase netLibrary titles from now until June 30 and agrees to add these titles to the MEL Ebooks collection, will be able to use all of its funds for titles. The access fee, which is normally part of any netLibrary purchase, will be taken care of by special arrangement through the Library of Michigan.

The first training session, conducted by the Library of Michigan and a netLibrary representative, will be held at the Rural Libraries Conference in early April. MLC will incorporate future MEL Ebooks training sessions into its AccessMichigan training program.

The MEL Ebooks project is funded with a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Library of Michigan.

Thanks to the Library of Michigan's MEL Ebook collection, you were able to find and include that quote from *The Nordstrom Way* in your presentation and you got that raise you'd been hoping for. Great job!



Library of Michigan, Government Printing Office Form Partnership

By Ann Marie Sanders, Depository Librarian

Do you wonder where the new librarians will come from to replace the waves of those retiring in the next few years? Our profession suffers from a lack of people entering the library field; we are already seeing the results of this deficiency as libraries try to fill positions. One year ago, I chaired the Public Library Association's Recruitment of Public Librarians Committee, commissioned by then-PLA president Christine Hage. The committee's report concluded that there is a documented shortage of librarians, librarian salaries are low in comparison to other professionals with the same educational requirements, and issues such as inflexibility in library jobs and limited career track discourage some from entering the library field.

What can we do about this? It is vital that we continue to work to offer competitive wages and benefits. It is equally important we provide family-friendly personnel policies and develop flexible hours and work schedules for our staff. Most people work for more than just a salary; to many, work schedule-flexibility is a needed priority. Another encouragement is to provide educational opportunities, such as leave time or scholarships, for staff to pursue a library education. I am a librarian today because someone encouraged me and gave me the educational opportunity, including leave time, to pursue my MLS.

One of the easiest and most effective things we can do is to personally encourage people to enter the library field. Ask almost any librarian and you'll hear a story about a special person who encouraged or inspired him or her to be a librarian. Be that special person in someone's life.

Christine

The Library of Michigan and the U.S. Government Printing Office have joined together to make information for and about the nation's 53 regional federal depository libraries available on the World Wide Web. The Library of Michigan, one of Michigan's two regional depository libraries, developed the "Regional Federal Depository Libraries," a series of pages found at <http://libraryofmichigan.org/services/regional.html>. The site offers a wide array of practical information at one convenient location that will be of interest to regional librarians and the selective depository librarians and the libraries they serve. The page has links to tools and information created by regional libraries, the Government Printing Office, and the Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association. The Library of Michigan organized and will maintain the site.

The national system of regional depository libraries was established in 1962, when revisions to the United States Code mandated the creation of one or more depositories in each state to provide a full collection of federal publications and various support and liaison services. The Library of Michigan was designated a depository library in 1860 and a regional depository in 1964. In the intervening years, the regional libraries have become an integral part of the administration of the nation's premiere system that provides free and open access to federal government information. Regional libraries help develop and manage collections, provide reference services to collections of last resort, provide support for the inspection of depository libraries, and act as leaders among depository staff.

The Regional Federal Depository Libraries pages will be woven into the FDLP Desktop, GPO's central source for information about the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) at http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/index.html. The Library of Michigan joins a growing number of institutions that have developed web-based services to enhance the use of FDLP administrative information in service partnerships, or that help to assure permanent public access to content of electronic government publications through informational partnerships. These new partnerships are built on the successful model of cooperation that has been in place in the FDLP for over 100 years. The Library of Michigan's Regional Depository Libraries website is the fourth service partnership established nationally.

April 1-8, 2001 National Library Week: Catch the Magic

By Jo Budler, Deputy State Librarian



Ask any library user about his or her first experience at a library and almost every one of us is able and willing to describe it in detail. For many it was magical: coming upon a treasure trove. My own branch library was located at 130th Street and Liberty Avenue in the Queens borough of New York City. Located in a small storefront, the library's interior was dark but oh, so inviting. The shelves held treasures for which the librarian served as both guide and benefactor. She opened worlds for us, in much the same way Tinkerbell did with her magic wand at the beginning of *The Wonderful World of Disney* on Sunday night television. The whole scene changed when I opened the book she handed to me and I started to read.

The magic of libraries has increased over the years as our services have expanded. Forty years ago we traveled afar through the pages of books. Now audio books tell us about those same far-away places as we drive back and forth to work. We check out videos that transport us to foreign locales. The Internet virtually takes us anywhere and helps us learn about almost anything. Ebooks, whether read on handheld devices or via the Internet, allow us to access books in a whole new way. The netLibrary collection at the Library of Michigan, through AccessMichigan and MEL, allows us to literally reach across great distances to check out books from a shared collection, changing the whole manner by which we share resources.

The one constant in all this change is the specialist who guides us: the librarian. Today, when the options we have are so varied, we need our guides even more. Librarians not only help us find and evaluate resources outside the library, they also choose the resources that are offered to us on our "shelves"—both virtual and real—based on each library community's needs. It is no small task to learn about the library users of today. Ours is a complex community. Couple this with the multitude of media options and one realizes and appreciates the great challenge that librarians face.

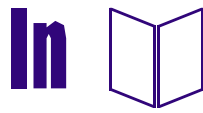
On behalf of all library users, I'd like to send a special thanks to all of you for continuing to spread the magic, not only during National Library Week but every week of the year.

N M L A W a r d
N o m i n a t i o n s
S o u g h t

Trustee Citation of Merit
Walter Kaiser Memorial Award
Loleta Fyan Award
Librarian of the Year
Award of Excellence
Life Membership Award

Nomination Deadline: May 7, 2001

For nomination information and forms, contact the MLA office or any member of the Awards Committee: Karren Reish (Library of Michigan), Gerald Bosler (Macomb Community College), Annette Haines (Central Michigan University), Judi Stillion (Alpena County Library), Brian Stoutenburg (Troy Public Library), Shari Buxbaum (Michigan State University), Marie Chulski (Monroe County Library System), Sue Homant (University



A Literacy Grant Program of the Library of Michigan Foundation

By Sarah D. Watkins, Executive Director
Library of Michigan Foundation

The Library of Michigan Foundation provides annual grants through its Read Indeed! Grant Program to help adults improve their ability to read, write, and speak English. The Read Indeed! Grant Program works in collaboration with public libraries and community organizations.

Leadership and Generosity

Created in 1992 by the Library of Michigan Foundation Board of Directors under the leadership of Michigan's First Lady, Michelle Engler, (Foundation board member, vice-president for nine years, and chair of the Literacy Committee) the first Read Indeed! grants were awarded in 1993. Initial funding for the program was provided by the Richard and Helen DeVos Foundation, the W.K. McGregor Fund, National Institute for Literacy, State Literacy Resource Center at Central Michigan University, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, Scott Shuptrine Fine Furnishings, and other donors.

In the nine years that the Read Indeed! Literacy Program of the Foundation has been in existence, more than \$518,000 has been given to 62 libraries and literacy organizations in Michigan. Thanks to these grants, thousands of individuals in Michigan have acquired the skills necessary to function on a job and in society at levels previously unattainable.

2001 Grants

On April 18, the Foundation will send out requests for proposals, guidelines and application forms to libraries and literacy organizations across Michigan. This year there are new guidelines and a new application.

Read Indeed! grant applications must be post-marked no later than June 15. During the week of June 18-22, Foundation staff will give each application an identification number, review it for completion, and send an acknowledgement letter indicating that the application was received.

On June 29, the Proposal Review Committee, made up of 8 volunteers and staff, will review all applications received. Then, on August 21, a summary report of those projects recommended for funding will be presented to the Foundation board of directors for final approval.

During the week of August 27, letters and checks will be sent to applicants whose projects were approved. If a challenge grant is awarded, the organization will simply be notified that the Foundation has reserved grant funds for them for an 18-month period. Those organizations that do not receive funding

will also be notified within this timeframe.

For additional information about applying for a 2001 Read Indeed! Grant, visit our website at <http://libraryofmichigan.org>, and click on Library of Michigan Foundation and then Read Indeed! 2001 Schedule and Granting Program Sequence. You may also contact the Foundation at (517) 373-1297 with questions or to request an application.

Making It All Happen

Gifts from donors, corporations and foundations make it possible for the Foundation to continue providing funding for this valuable statewide program. If you would like to make a gift to support the Read Indeed! Grant opportunity, please send your check payable to Library of Michigan Foundation (with "Read Indeed!" at the bottom left of your check) to:

Library of Michigan Foundation
P. O. Box 30159
Lansing, MI 48909

Fix 496

By Carey L. Draeger, Public Information Officer

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is overseeing a major road construction project to repair and rebuild major parts of the I-496 corridor through downtown Lansing. This \$40 million investment, which stretches from Waverly Road in Lansing to Trowbridge Road in East Lansing, began April 3, 2001. MDOT promises the repairs and bridge rebuilding will be completed by September 1 in just one construction season. MDOT crews will:

- rebuild 32 bridges;
- reconstruct 1 mile of freeway;
- repair 7 miles of freeway; and
- add a third (merge/weave) lane in each direction between US-127 and Pennsylvania Ave.

During Phase 1 of this huge road construction project, I-496 will be closed from Pine Street to US-127. At this time, US-127 near Trowbridge Road in East Lansing will be reduced to one lane from Memorial Day to Independence Day.

Phase 2 of the project, which will not begin until Phase 1 is completed and I-496 is reopened, will extend from Pine Street to I-96 and will shut down all but one lane in both directions. Phase 2 will occur from September to November 2001.

Why is this important to those of you outside the Lansing area? If you're planning to come to the Library of Michigan between April and November 2001, your driving plans may have to include an alternate route to reach the Library. For more information, contact MDOT at its 24-hour hotline (517-335-0496) or visit the I-496 construction website at <http://www.fix496.com>.




Finding Good Computer Help

The Challenge of Finding (And Affording) Good Computer Help:

Look to the Younger Generation!

By Karen Keller, Automated Services Head
Brighton District Library



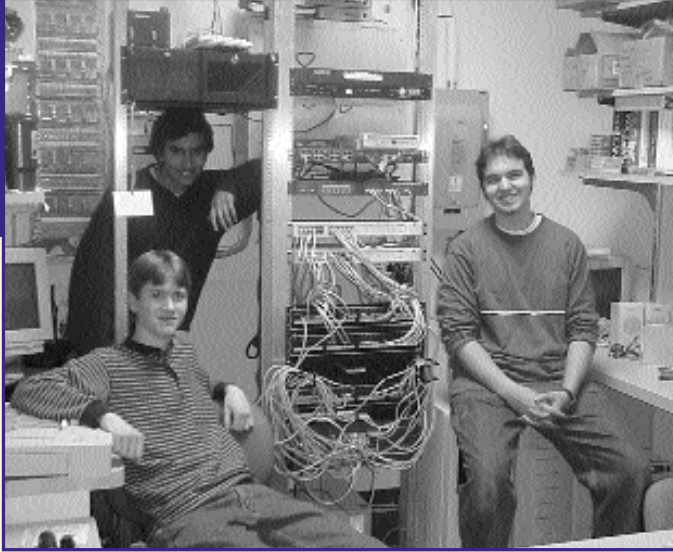
It's no surprise to librarians that the libraries we run have become increasingly complicated with large computer/automated systems. Though the technical requirements to run a library in this computer age have rapidly changed, the human and financial resources required don't always match up quickly enough. Hiring, training and maintaining competent computer staff presents an ongoing challenge. Library salaries often are not competitive with private industry, yet the level of sophistication and size of the computing facilities of libraries are the same.

The computer system is not the only problem: according to an article in the May/June 1999 issue of *Public Libraries*, "Americans identify as 'very important' that libraries provide a place where people can receive help in using computers and online resources." The August 1996 issue of *Library Journal* noted that "providing technical support when things don't work may be even more important than the equipment itself. Help has to be both competent and timely, whether it is provided on-site or as a part of a service contract." What, then, is the answer?

Recent library school graduates often demonstrate a better knowledge of computer technology but attracting them is difficult in the low-wage library world. Graduates are drawn to private industry for the same reasons that computer science graduates are—better salaries. Librarians whose degrees predate computers may have picked up on-the-job training, but they realistically may not be able to handle complex computer networks. They can't act as computer technician, systems analyst, network administrator, database developer, and webmaster and perform a librarian's duties in reference, collection development, and events programming, as well.

*"Americans identify
as 'very important'
that libraries provide
a place where people
can receive help in
using computers and
online resources."*





The Brighton District Library computer aids are (from left to right) Matt Galazka, Manju Joyasuriya and Derek Engi.


There are ways to cope. The Brighton District Library has been able to meet the demands for technology (we have over 55 computers) and support that our patrons identified as “very important.” Our primary success has come from tapping into the abilities of our high school students. Since 1996, when we moved into a new facility with a large computer technology offering, we successfully found, cultivated and maintained good technical help from within our community.

Student help is not a panacea. It comes with its own set of problems, but we have been able to minimize and manage the inconveniences and exploit the benefits—competent technical support at an affordable price. Two high school students are employed by the library at a competitive hourly rate, given schedule flexibility, asked to assume progressive responsibility as their expertise and maturity permits, and are given an opportunity to expand their technical skills.

The emphasis is on “expand their technical skills” because you cannot expect to hire a high school student who is capable of walking into your library and managing your library’s computer system. You must first find someone with basic computer skills and the other attributes that make up a good employee. Don’t go looking for Bill Gates, Jr., expecting for a level of expertise and range that is so unrealistic that you will scare away candidates who carefully consider a job’s requirements. Determine what your primary and most critical need is, target it, and then look for basic skills and the ability to learn.


A key trigger I use is how much the high school candidates tinker at home. Most of our student employees have usually torn apart a computer at home and built one or more themselves. They understand the guts of the hardware, know something about software, maybe not a lot about networking but some, and they have a passion for computers—this kind of a job is like playing to them. They also must be able to communicate, assist and interact with library staff and the public. Another major skill your computer candidate needs is the ability to work responsibly on his/her own, without a lot of direct supervision. This can be a tall order for some high school students. They aren’t used to it and may not be mature enough to assume it or abuse it. The good news is that I’ve worked with seven students since 1996 and only one wasn’t able to work independently.

How do you find students? The best way is to approach your local high



school and contact the technology department. The teacher will be able to tell you who are the best students. You can also advertise through the high school newspaper and/or in local computer stores. Once you've hired your first students and created an exciting and rewarding work environment for them, word gets around that this is a great job. You probably won't have to advertise or do much searching in the future because the students will be coming to you.

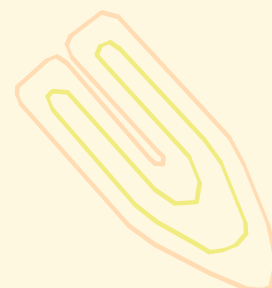
I prefer to hire students who are in their sophomore or junior years—the turnover is low and I can count on them for 2-3 years. I also try to “stagger” my staff so that I don't have only senior students and then face training an entirely new staff when they graduate. The seniors can also train the newcomers throughout the year before they leave. I hire during the spring or mid-summer, before my seniors graduate and leave, so there is some opportunity for overlap and training.



I provide a concise, detailed job description. We also organize our system of reporting computer problems so that work direction is automatic. Staff complete a Computer Problem Report; when a student walks in the door, the job sheets are ready to go. Our students normally work after school for 3-5 hours during the week and rotate coverage on Saturdays.

For big things, such as upgrades and expansions, I still use my students but I turn to my seasoned employees (those who have graduated and are in college pursuing degrees in computer science). I plan this kind of work to coincide around semester breaks and hire my former employees to help with the work. It's a win-win situation: they have some well-paid work for a short period of time. I have someone who knows my system and whose work I trust.

Another unique arrangement we use is to hire one of our college students for a full-time summer job. We arrange with three other libraries in our area to jointly hire this person, with the Brighton District Library as the employer of record. The college student acts as a computer circuit rider and works at the participating libraries one or two days a week, depending on how much time s/he contracts for. This arrangement is quite successful: we are able to keep someone who is especially well-qualified; we maintain stable, experienced help; and we make sure that we plan and execute changes and improvements to our computer system in a timely, consistent manner.



Libraries will always need to have someone on staff to oversee their computer systems. The use of students at the Brighton District Library has meant that we have good, reasonably priced technical help and we can keep up with the growing technology needs of our libraries and our patrons. We are able to do this and still allow our librarians to be librarians. Someone on the staff still needs some computer knowledge to be the point-person to supervise, plan and manage the big picture.

There are additional ways to manage as well. Make sure that all library staff is trained in basic computer skills. Usually one or two staff members know “a little something” about computers. They can always be of help but use them sparingly and wisely. We have also created and consulted with our Technology Advisory Committee, which is a part of our board of trustees. These are community members who work in the computer industry, lend their expertise to the library and keep us abreast of technology trends. Our local computer users group has also been one of our best partners. Group members have taught introductory Internet classes to the public at our library since 1996. Classes are offered twice a month, except during the summer months. We could not have offered this kind of long-term training if we’d used our staff. This is an important point in managing technology—make sure your public is trained, too!

Karen welcomes comments and questions. Contact her at the Brighton District Library, 100 Library Drive, Brighton, Michigan 48116, or you may email her at kkeller@brighton.lib.mi.us. Visit the Brighton District Library website at <http://brighton.lib.mi.us>



Double-0 21: Three Times Better Than Double-0 7

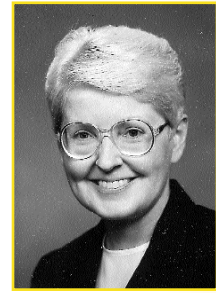
Unlike James Bond, Agent 007 of Her Majesty’s Secret Service, information-seeking librarians in Michigan won’t need a special gismo to contact the Library of Michigan. They won’t have to rack up long-distance costs every time they call the Library, either. Their telephone troubles are over!

The Library of Michigan now has a toll-free telephone number. The next time you need an answer for an LSTA-related question or want details about certifying a staff member, all you have to do is dial **1-877-479-0021**. This number rings directly to the desk of our knowledgeable Library development assistant, who will transfer you to the division or person that can answer your questions.

The next time you need answers from the Library of Michigan, call **1-877-479-0021** and save a buck or two!

Toll-free 1-877-479-0021

By Ellen Richardson, Library Law Specialist



Internet Access (*Again!*)

It seems like only yesterday that public libraries in Michigan were struggling to meet the requirements of Michigan Public Act 212 of 2000.

Library trustees were re-examining the “Acceptable Use” policies of their local libraries, listening to the concerns of citizens and librarians, and heeding the advice of legal counsel. Some library boards chose to install filtering software on computers that gave minors access to the Internet. Others chose to have staff monitor children’s use of the Internet or to require that parents be present when a child accessed the Internet. The state law mandated the protection of minors accessing the Internet; but local determination of the method of protection was an important aspect of the statute.

Libraries that take advantage of E-rate discounts for Internet access or receive funding under the LSTA or ESEA programs will soon have to revisit the question of Internet access by minors. A new federal law, Public Law 106-554, passed by Congress and signed by the president in December 2000, imposes on certain libraries and schools various requirements relating to the adoption of Internet safety policies and the use of blocking and filtering technology. Two separate acts—the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act (NCIPA or the Neighborhood Act)—impose significant new requirements on recipients of the federal grants.

Basically, the two new federal laws mandate three actions by affected libraries:

1. Adopt Internet safety policies that address:
 - access by minors to “inappropriate matter” on the Internet, with local determination of what is “inappropriate for minors”;
 - safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication;
 - unauthorized access by minors;
 - unauthorized disclosure of personal identification information of minors; and
 - measures designed to restrict minors’ access to harmful materials.

2. Provide notice and hold at least one hearing or meeting on the proposed Internet safety policy.

3. Certify that the library has adopted and implemented an Internet safety policy that includes operation of a “technology protection measure” that “blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.” The library must also certify that the operation of the “technology protection measure” is mandatory during use of the computers by minors.

In other words, if your library hopes to receive future E-rate discounts and LSTA funds to purchase computers for Internet access or to pay for Internet access, filtering or blocking technology on library computers may no longer be a local option. The requirements for E-rate discounts differ slightly from the requirements for receiving LSTA funds. The mandate for use of a “technology protection measure” (read “filtering software”) is the common thread of the two laws.

The new statute takes effect 120 days after enactment, or April 20, 2001. Until the appropriate federal agencies adopt rules and guidelines, public libraries should continue to enforce their already adopted policies and to use the E-rate discounts and the grant funds available to them. The application procedures for both sources of funds should continue to go forward.

Many questions remain about the new laws. The Library of Michigan and the Michigan library cooperatives will work to keep libraries up-to-date on the new requirements, deadlines for adoption of policies, certifications of compliance, and the rule-making procedures of the federal agencies. Look for more information in *Access*. Watch for announcements on *michlib-l* and from your library cooperatives.

Nominations for Information Literacy Award

The Michigan Library Association's (MLA) Information Literacy Award recognizes a Michigan librarian, from any type of library, who has made an especially significant contribution to instructional activities in libraries. The individual selected for this award will automatically be nominated for an appropriate national instructional award, such as the Miriam Dudley or the Allie Beth Martin Awards. Nominees should have distinguished themselves in one or more of the following areas:

- planning and implementation of an instructional program;
- leadership in organizations concerned with instruction in the library environment;
- production of a body of research that has positively affected teaching and research education in libraries;
- exhibited, in a library setting, an outstanding ability to share their knowledge with others.

To obtain a form and more information about this award, please visit the Michigan Library Association website at <http://www.mla.lib.mi.us/Forms/ILRT.htm>. The deadline for nominations for the Information Literacy Award is May 1, 2001

New Access to Michigan 1870 Census Records @ Library of Michigan

By Carey L. Draeger, Public Information Officer

Researchers all over the world may now access a new service that provides unprecedented access to the Michigan 1870 Census records. With a few clicks of the mouse, anyone may search the census index, and then view and print any document in which the information was recorded. Using documents previously available only in print and Microfilm formats, Network and Information Systems (NIS) staff at the Library of Michigan used the latest advances in database and imaging technology to combine the resources into a dynamic World Wide Web-based application.

"NIS and Public Service staff used the Michigan 1870 Census Index to build the files of names as they created the application," said David Lamb, who heads up the software development team. "Along with the names we also entered information about townships, counties, census roll numbers, and census pages/rolls." Lamb said when the application debuted in 1999, it was well received by the library community.

In June 2000 NIS began to digitize the images of the actual census documents from microfilm. This part of the project was completed in September 2000. After an initial indexing process, the new and improved 1870 Michigan Census made its public debut on October 1, 2000.

This unique resource is the first of its kind to be developed by a state library. It provides an index of 436,000 names that are cross referenced to 36,000 census documents. The service is free of charge for all users. It has been well received outside the library community. From October 2000 through January 2001, over 108,000 people used the application, downloading 299,000 census pages.

Lamb said that future additions to this project will include a digitized version of the *Michigan Cemetery Atlas*, and online access to the *Michigan Cemetery Index*. The 1870 Census Records are located at <http://envoy.libofmich.lib.mi.us/1870census>

TV-Turnoff Week is April 23-29, 2001

By Gretchen Taylor, Public Information Intern

Lil the librarian, the heroine of children's book *Library Lil* by Suzanne Williams, wants to convert her community into one of avid readers, but what can she do? They're all addicted to their television sets. Thanks to an unexpected power outage, the TV junkies in the town of Chesterville are forced to turn to the library and take up a new pastime—reading. By the end of a television-free two weeks, the townspeople have traded in their "boob tubes" for books.

The TV Turnoff Network is sponsoring a similar event, although it doesn't rely on a two-week power outage. The seventh annual National TV-Turnoff Week is April 23-29; during this week, millions of people nationwide are expected to turn off their TVs and turn on life.

According to TV Turnoff Network, the average American watches 4 hours of television each day. This habit adds up to over 2 months a year, or 9 years by age 65. Turning off the television gives people the opportunity to read, enjoy a more active lifestyle, be creative and connect with their families and communities.

Children also benefit from less television in their lives. One second-grader from Pennsylvania said, "I really didn't like TV-Turnoff Week except I did notice that my grades went up and I was in a good mood all week." American children actually spend more time watching TV each year (1,023 hours) than they do in school (900 hours).

Join your fellow Americans who will turn off their TVs during National TV-Turnoff Week this month. You just may discover that life is more fulfilling without it.

The Friends of the Clinton-Macomb Public Library are looking for readers to adopt a shelf or section at the library. "What we'd like people to do is select a section of the library and take responsibility for keeping that section in order," said Library Director Christine Lind Hage. Volunteers do not need any special experience, as the library staff will provide an individual quick training/orientation for each volunteer. The Friends of the Clinton-Macomb Public Library sponsor the program. "This is a program for customers who visit the library on a regular basis and would like to help out in a small way," said Jan Jones, secretary of the Friends of the Library. "We read that other libraries were doing this type of program and having great success so we thought we'd try it here at the Clinton-Macomb Public Library."

Volunteers can select the section of the library that interests them the most.

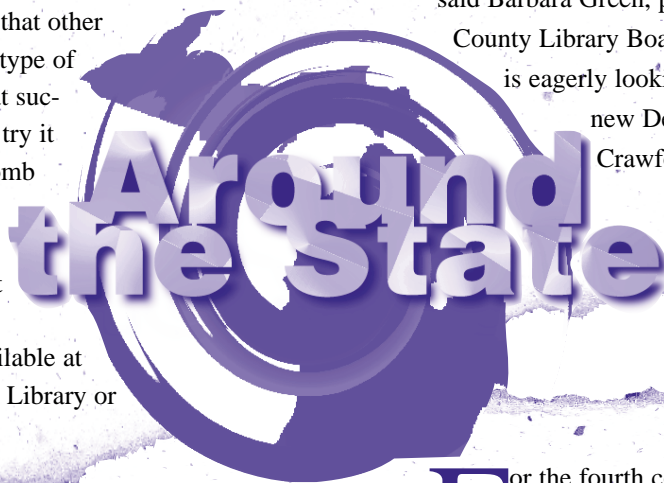
The program will be available at both the temporary Main Library or at the South Branch.

A collection of approximately 16,500 photographs at the Willard Public Library in Battle Creek is receiving a great deal of national attention. Since the collection was posted online last summer, it has received recognition as a recommended link from the web pages of the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution. The site, found at <http://www.willard.lib.mi.us>, provides a street-by-street catalog of buildings photographed in Battle Creek. Library staff spent about 2 years assembling the collection and scanning the old black-and-white photos. "One of the things this kind of technology does is it allows you to give access to community collections," said Library Director Rick Hulsey. "All of a sudden those stories can be told nationally better than they have before."

Thanks to a generous gift of \$500,000 from Leslie Devereaux, one of the community's summer residents, the people of Crawford County were inspired to pass a \$1.5 million bond issue. The funds from the bond will be used to build a new 11,000 square-foot library. Construction is scheduled to begin about April 15, 2001. Library staff plan to hold a grand opening on May 15, 2002. Construction and equipment will total about \$2 million. "This is quite an accomplishment for our small rural county," said Barbara Green, president of the Crawford County Library Board of Trustees. "Everyone is eagerly looking forward to using the new Devereaux Memorial Crawford County Library."

For the fourth consecutive year, the Cass District Library is sponsoring the Mr. & Miss Catsopolis contest. Entries to this contest will be accepted until March 31. Voting begins Monday, April 9, and continues through Saturday, May 19. The male and female cats with the most votes will serve as the official royalty for the Ed Lowe Catsopolis Days, June 22 and 23, in Cassopolis. Contestants' photos and bios will be online at <http://cass.lib.mi.us> after April 9. Proceeds will benefit the "Cats" District Library and the Animal Service League of Dowagiac. The goal is to beat last year's record setting total of 48,925 votes. Votes are 10 cents apiece, so vote early and often!

If you have a news item you would like to contribute, please contact Carey Draeger at 517-373-5578 or email: cdraeger@libraryofmichigan.org



State Librarian
Christie Pearson Brandau

Deputy State Librarian
Jo Budler

Public Information Officer
Carey Draeger

Graphic Design /Layout
Marnie M. Elden

Contributing Writers:

Karen Keller, Ellen Richardson, Ann Marie
Sanders, Gretchen Taylor, and Sarah Watkins

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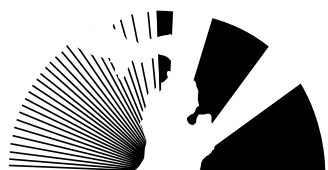
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